

IN SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

APRIL 11, 1848.

Submitted, and ordered to be printed.

Mr. MASON made the following

REPORT :

[To accompany bill H. R. No. 54.]

*The Committee of Claims, to whom was referred an act passed by the House of Representatives at its present session, entitled "An act for the relief of William Ralston," have had the same under consideration, and respectfully report:*

William Ralston, the petitioner, states that, being a minister of the gospel, belonging to the Presbyterian church, he volunteered, in June, 1846, as a private soldier in the regiment of volunteer cavalry. That soon after its organization he was appointed chaplain to the regiment by the colonel commanding, Jonas E. Thomas, under the erroneous supposition that he was vested with the authority to make such an appointment, or that, if such were not the case, the President would confirm it. Thus appointed, the petitioner proceeded in the discharge of his duties as chaplain during the campaign, as is stated, and he now asks to be allowed such a compensation as "the services appertaining to the office in allusion (query?) would reasonably require."

Independently of the want of any authority on the part of the colonel commandant of a regiment to make such an appointment as the one in question, there is no such office as that of chaplain to a regiment known to the military service, the appointment of chaplain of brigade being the only one recognised by law. Such being the case, the committee deem it inexpedient to alter the existing law, or to establish a precedent variant from its policy, and therefore report the bill with a recommendation that it do not pass.

